REMARKS

Claims 1-10 remain in the application and have been amended hereby.

As will be noted from the Declaration, Applicants are citizens and residents of Japan and this application originated there.

Accordingly, the amendments made to the specification are provided to place the application in idiomatic English, and the claims are amended to place them in better condition for examination.

An early and favorable examination on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE
IN THE ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Please amend the Abstract by rewriting same to read as follows.

An information retrieval apparatus includes an input unit from which information-retrieval information is input, database interfaces [which] that can access databases, a display unit for displaying, in the form of a bar, information [which] that is obtained by the access, a central processing unit (CPU) [which] that can move a cursor for designating a position in the lengthwise direction of the information bar and [which] that uses a database interface to retrieve, from the databases, information corresponding to the lengthwise position designated by the cursor. The information retrieved by the CPU is displayed on the display unit[. In this structure,] , and data can be retrieved without the user performing [user-used inputting] an input operation by using a keyboard or the like.

IN THE CLAIMS

--1. (Amended) An information retrieval apparatus for performing information retrieval from an information source, said information retrieval apparatus comprising:

input means in which a [selectively] selective inputting operation is performed;

database-access-interface means which accesses a database as said information source for [the] retrieving information [retrieval] in response to [the] a use of said input means;

display means for displaying, in [the] a form of [a] an information bar, information [which] that is obtained by [the] accessing [of] said database by said database-access-interface means;

cursor moving means for moving a cursor in response to the use of said input means in order to designate a position in [the] a lengthwise direction of the information bar displayed [on] by said display means; and

retrieval means for retrieving information, corresponding to the designated lengthwise position, from said database by using said database-access-interface means[;],

wherein the retrieved information is displayed on said display means.

--2. (Amended) [An] The information retrieval apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein:

[the] lengthwise sections of the displayed information bar each have index-item information; and

said display means displays the index-item information corresponding to one lengthwise section in which [the] a position in the lengthwise direction of the displayed information bar is designated by using said cursor moving means.

--3. (Amended) [An] The information retrieval apparatus according to Claim 1, [wherein] further comprising a built-in database accessed by said database-access-interface means [accesses a built-in database of said information retrieval apparatus].

--4. (Amended) [An] The information retrieval apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said database-access-interface means accesses a database outside said information retrieval apparatus.

--5. (Amended) [An] The information retrieval apparatus

according to Claim 1, wherein said database-access-interface means uses a network to access a database outside said information retrieval apparatus.

--6. (Amended) An information retrieval method for performing information retrieval from an information source, said information retrieval method comprising:

an input step in which a [selectively] selective inputting operation is performed;

a display step for displaying information in the form of [a] an information bar on display means, the displayed information being obtained by using database-access-interface means to access a database as said information source for information retrieval in response to [the] an execution of said input step;

a cursor moving step for moving a cursor in response to the execution of said input step in order to designate a position in [the] a lengthwise direction of the displayed information bar; and

a retrieval step for retrieving information corresponding to the designated position from said database by using said database-access-interface means[;],

wherein the retrieved information is displayed on said display means.

--7. (Amended) [An] The information retrieval method according to Claim 6, wherein:

[the] lengthwise sections of the displayed information bar each have index-item information; and

in said display step, said display means displays the index-item information corresponding to one lengthwise section in which the position in the lengthwise direction of the displayed

information bar is designated by using said cursor.

--8. (Amended) [An] The information retrieval method according to Claim 6, wherein said database-access-interface means accesses a built-in database of an apparatus in which said information retrieval method is performed.

--9. (Amended) [An] The information retrieval method according to Claim 6, wherein said database-access-interface means accesses a database outside an apparatus in which said information retrieval method is performed.

--10. (Amended) [An] The information retrieval method according to Claim 6, wherein said database-access-interface means uses a network to access a database outside an apparatus in which said information retrieval method is performed.